

Power Parenting: Mom

The Journey

The Purpose of This Series- This series is entitled “The Journey” particularly for the purpose of learning to live the affective and fruitful life of a believer. These thirteen messages are shared to give the believer, young or old, new or seasoned, a clearer picture of the life intended for them and what God has for them. I believe this series will help the believer tie up some loose end and help them walk with confidence and abundance.

The Purpose of This Message- This message is not for the faint at heart. Our nation is at a most challenging point. The family break-up, unwanted and unexpected pregnancies are redefining family. This isn't about the “atomic” family being restored, this is about appropriate love and nurturing within the family being restored.

According to child abuse experts, abuse and neglect is reaching epidemic proportions with disastrous consequences. Tax dollars are in a tug-of-war in an attempt to best prevent abuse and preserving families. Of course, like many government agencies, they believe the problem is because there isn't an inadequate amount of resources invested by the state and Federal government to make this prevention possible. They see it as a political and organizational problem. Sadly, taxes and resources could help, if the underlying motive could be met, the loving, nurturing side of man must be healed!

Mom's are very special people in our lives. Something that needs to be stated today before I fully carry out this message is, Mom's, I am not picking on you today and I'm not picking one everyones mother. What I want to do is to explore the influence of a mom, particularly in a man's life. I want to explain how sometimes what a mom does that is intended for good can end up as a wound in her children's life, and influencing a man's life.

In their book, “The Mom Factor,” Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townson make this statement:

“Outside of Dad, no one has influenced your life other than your mother. The way that she has handled your life as a child has shaped your world view, your relationships, your marriage, your career, your self image, your life. What we learned in our relationship with our mother deeply affects every area of our adult life now.”

Mom's go deep inside of each one of us. It influences every aspect of our lives.

There is a recording on the little black box of an airplane that crashed and as the plane was closest to the ground the pilot was recorded as saying, “Mom.” It was like his very primal beginnings, his very core cried out. Obviously, at the basis of this mans life stood mom. When it was all but over, she was the core thought in his mind.

*“As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were **gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.**”*

1 Thessalonians 2:6b-7

Apostle (652) (*apostolos* from *apo* = from + *stello* = send forth) means one sent forth from by another. Someone who was officially commissioned to a position or task. In the ancient world an apostle was the personal representatives of the king, functioning as an ambassador with the king's authority and provided with credentials to prove he

was in representation of the king. Cargo ships were sometimes called apostolic, because they were dispatched with a specific shipment for a specific destination. In secular Greek *apostolos* was used of an admiral of a fleet sent out by the king on special assignment.

As we read this scripture, this is the first time Paul describes himself or his companions as apostles in I Thessalonians and the only time Silas and Timothy are described as apostles in the bible. Paul was making a point, he had authority and there was none higher, to go and live among these people. He was making it clear that it would not be out of order if he had expectations from the Thessalonians and they provide for his well being...but he or they didn't. They were "gentle," like a mother caring for her little children.

"...but we were gentle among you..."

Gentle (2261) (*epios*) means gentle, mild, easy, compliant (like a nursing mother). *Epios* was frequently used by Greek writers as characterizing a nurse with trying children or a teacher with challenging students, or of parents toward their children.

Paul is stating, "I'm on the Kings assignment. I could have acted as such to you and requested that you make my life easy and expected all sorts of things that would not be out of order...but I didn't. I treated you with gentleness, like a nursing mother."

A nursing mother imparts her own life to the child. This is exactly what Paul wrote in 1Thessalonians 2:8. You cannot be a nursing mother and turn your baby over to someone else. That baby must be in your arms, next to your heart. The nursing mother eats the food and transforms it into milk for the baby. (Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor or Logos)

Nursing mother (5162) (*trophos* from *trepheo* = to nourish, feed, nurture) Meaning, one who nourishes, feeds and rears up a child. A nourisher, feeder, rearer. This word means any woman who breast-feeds (nurses) a baby. It could refer to a mother or what used to be called a wet nurse. But in this case Paul says it in terms of "*her little children.*"

W. A. Criswell put it precisely this way, "**Paul didn't feed on them; he fed them.**" (Criswell, W A. Believer's Study Bible: New King James Version. 1991. Thomas Nelson)

Tenderly cares (2282)(*thalpo*) primarily means to heat, **to soften by heat**, then, **to keep warm**, as of birds covering their young with their feathers. Josephus, Ant. 7, 343 uses *thalpo* in his description of a young woman who provided warmth for King David.

The picture that Paul paints here is a mother, one who nurses but provides needed heat for protection and life. **She is not only life nourishing, she is life giving, to cherish with tender love, to foster with tender care.!** This is a wonderful picture, surely someone has been inspired to paint this one.

"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us."

I Thessalonians 2:8

Having fond affection (2442) (*homeiromai* or *himeíromai* from *hímeros* = a longing or yearning after) means to desire, **to be affectionately desirous of**. These are strong feelings that manifest in much affection and love.

This is the only place in Scripture this term is used that indicates the yearning love of a mother for her children. Paul is putting himself out there, not only nurturing but protecting as well.

Well pleased/delighted (2106) (*eudokeo* from *eu* = well + *dokeo* = think) means to think well of, approve of or take pleasure in.

Paul's point was that it was two things functioning in him, his **love** and his **delighted** in sharing, (it pleased them), both the gospel and their lives. They laid down their lives for the gospel, but also for them. This is the point he was making and I'm not sure it was a personal revelation for himself. There was such a deep connection between him and the Thessalonians that the gospel message was not the only driving force, it was the love of the people. Sometimes the love of the people can cause us to sacrifice. Both are a reason to place ourselves aside for the betterment of those around us. **When love is lost, delight will not be far behind. When love is found, delight will soon appear.**

This is like the adventures of a parent. If you sat down and looked at all the things you would be required of, the diapers changed, the feedings in the night, the destruction of your living room, bath room, bed room, back yard...and that's just in one day! Tomorrow you get to experience it all over again, no one would want to do it. They would maybe because they had to, but it wouldn't be driven by love, but responsibility.

Paul's revelation to the Thessalonians was, "I've never had something grab ahold of my heart like the revelation of God's Word and the demand upon my life to go and share it with others, and to that, I would die for it. But something happened when I got around you guys. There is a drive that is rising above or at least equal to the gospel, and that is my love for you. I can't help it, I want to do things for you. I just can't stand to think that you would have to help me in the middle of your own sufferings. I can't do it. I think about you and can only think of how I might be able to help you that much more, something that goes beyond the nurturing of the word of God, but the warmth of love's embrace."

Paul was messed up with by the intimate relationship with the Thessalonians. He couldn't "Apostle" them, he could only "parent them like a mother!"

How To Make Your Point Without Driving Your Kids Crazy!

"Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you."

I Thessalonians 2:9

Now the camera swings from the image of a loving, nurturing and protective mother to Paul and companions so you might make the connection to their underlying motives for being among the Thessalonians. Paul wasn't like the mother who lists all the things she did for her kids, hoping to gain respect, activity and support. But he is telling them what they need to know.

Recall (3421) (*mnemoneuo*) means to **exercise memory**, call something to mind, recollect. Paul expected the Thessalonians to remember how they too had labored while they were with them.

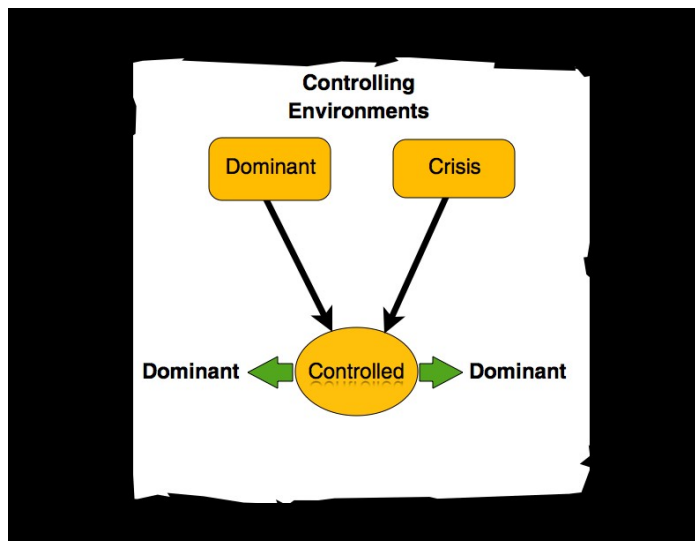
Many mothers deal with the lack of respect or response from their children. Here are three ways to deal with this issue:

1. **Accept it**- Many mothers today accept the lack of respect and response because of the situation they are in. **Many moms confuse their personal giftings; loving, nurturing and serving, with their personal responsibility, directing, developing and discernment.**

"Discipline your children, and they will give you happiness and peace of mind."
Proverbs 29:17

Think future, not fracture!

2. **Abuse it**- Mothers can get the attitude where they become resentful of doing anything for their children. Their children are an inconvenience and a distraction rather than a blessing and an honor.



In 1996, more than three million victims of alleged abuse were reported to child protective services (CPS) agencies in the United States. There are basically four types of abuse:

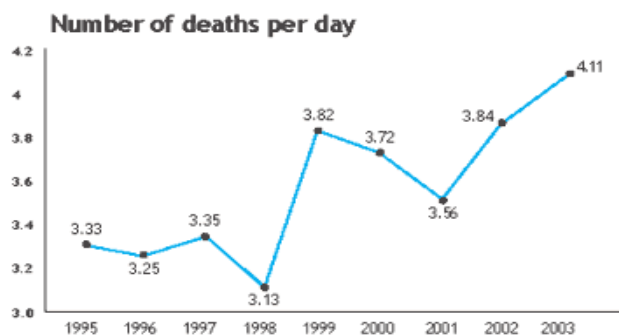
1. **PHYSICAL ABUSE.** Infliction of physical injury to a child most often by a male. A rare form of physical abuse is Munchausen syndrome by proxy, in which a caretaker (most often the mother) seeks attention by making the child sick or appear to be sick. **24% of abuse cases are reported as physical abuse.**
2. **SEXUAL ABUSE.** Charles F. Johnson defines child sexual abuse as "any activity with a child, before the age of legal consent, that is for the sexual gratification of an adult or a significantly older child." It includes, among other things, sexual touching and penetration, persuading a child to

expose his or her sexual organs, and allowing a child to view pornography. In most cases the child is related to or knows the abuser, and about one in five abusers are themselves underage. Sexual abuse is about 12% of abuse cases. **An estimated 20–25% of females and 10–15% of males report that they were sexually abused by age 18.**

3. **EMOTIONAL ABUSE.** Emotional abuse, according to Richard D. Krugman, "has been defined as the rejection, ignoring, criticizing, isolation, or terrorizing of children, all of which have the effect of eroding their self-esteem." Emotional abuse usually expresses itself in verbal attacks involving rejection, scapegoating, belittlement, and so forth. Because it often accompanies other types of abuse and is difficult to prove, it is rarely reported, and accounted for only **6% of the confirmed cases.**
4. **NEGLECT.** Neglect—failure to satisfy a child's basic needs—can assume many forms. Physical neglect is the failure (beyond the constraints imposed by poverty) to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or supervision. Emotional neglect is the failure to satisfy a child's normal emotional needs, or behavior that damages a child's normal emotional and psychological development (such as permitting drug abuse in the home). Failing to see that a child receives proper schooling or medical care is also considered neglect. In 1996 neglect was the finding in **52% of the confirmed abuse cases.**

Child Abuse in America...

Children are suffering from a hidden epidemic of child abuse and neglect. While 3 million reports of child abuse are made every year in the United States, experts estimate that the actual number of incidents of abuse and neglect is 3 times greater than reported.



Statistics

- 4 children die every day as a result of child abuse and three out of four of these victims are under the age of 4.
- A report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds.
- Of the reported rapes of children under 12 years old, 90% of the victims knew the perpetrator.
- Child abuse occurs at every socio-economic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education.
- 36.7% of all women in prison and 14.4% of all men in prison in the United States were abused as children.
- Children who have been sexually abused are 2.5 times more likely to abuse alcohol and 3.8 times more likely to become addicted to drugs.
- One third of abused and neglected children will later abuse their own children, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse.

2006 National Child Maltreatment Statistics tells us about 2006:

- During 2006, **64.1%** of victims experienced **neglect**, in addition, **15.1%** of victims experienced such "other" types of maltreatment as "abandonment," "threats of harm to the child," or "congenital drug addiction."
- **16.0%** were **physically abused**,
- **8.8%** were **sexually abused**,
- **6.6%** were **emotionally mistreated**.

It is well documented that children who have been abused or neglected are more likely to experience adverse outcomes throughout their life span in a number of areas:

- **Poor physical health** (e.g., chronic fatigue, altered immune function, hypertension, sexually

transmitted diseases, obesity);

- **Poor emotional and mental health** (e.g., depression, anxiety, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts and attempts, post-traumatic stress disorder);
- **Social difficulties** (e.g., insecure attachments with caregivers, which may lead to difficulties in developing trusting relationships with peers and adults later in life);
- **Cognitive dysfunction** (e.g., deficits in attention, abstract reasoning, language development, and problem-solving skills, which ultimately affect academic achievement and school performance);
- **High-risk health behaviors** (e.g., a higher number of lifetime sexual partners, younger age at first voluntary intercourse, teen pregnancy, alcohol and substance abuse); and
- **Behavioral problems** (e.g., aggression, juvenile delinquency, adult criminality, abusive or violent behavior) (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2006; Goldman, Salus, Wolcott, & Kennedy, 2003; Hagele, 2005).

Look at the direct estimated annual cost of child abuse and neglect in the United States:

1. Hospitalization

Rationale: 565,000 maltreated children suffered serious injuries in 1993¹. Assume that 50% of seriously injured victims require hospitalization². The average cost of treating one hospitalized victim of abuse and neglect was \$19,266³Calculation: $565,000 \times 0.50 \times \$19,266 = \$5,442,645,000$

Annual Cost (in 2007 dollars) \$6,625,959,263

2. Mental Health Care System

Rationale: 25% to 50% of child maltreatment victims need some form of mental health treatment⁴. For a conservative estimate, 25% is used. Mental health care cost per victim by type of maltreatment is: physical abuse (\$2,700); sexual abuse (\$5,800); emotional abuse (\$2,700) and educational neglect (\$910)⁴. Cross referenced against NIS-3 statistics on number of each incident occurring in 1993¹.

- *Calculations: Physical Abuse – $381,700 \times 0.25 \times \$2,700 = \$257,647,500$;*
- *Sexual Abuse – $217,700 \times 0.25 \times \$5,800 = \$315,665,000$;*
- *Emotional Abuse – $204,500 \times 0.25 \times \$2,700 = \$138,037,500$;*
- *Educational Neglect – $397,300 \times 0.25 \times \$910 = \$90,385,750$;*

Total = \$801,735,750.

Annual Cost (in 2007 dollars) \$1,080,706,049

3. Child Welfare Services System

Rationale: The Urban Institute conducted a study estimating the child welfare expenditures associated with child abuse and neglect by state and local public child welfare agencies to be \$23.3 billion in 2004⁵.

Annual Cost (in 2007 dollars) \$25,361,329,051

4. Law Enforcement

Rationale: The National Institute of Justice estimated the following costs of police services for each of the following interventions:

- *physical abuse (\$20);*
- *sexual abuse (\$56);*
- *emotional abuse (\$20)*
- *educational neglect (\$2)⁴.*
- *Cross referenced against NIS-3 statistics on number of each incident occurring in 1993¹.*

Calculations: Physical Abuse – $381,700 \times \$20 = \$7,634,000$; Sexual Abuse – $217,700 \times \$56 = \$12,191,200$; Emotional Abuse – $204,500 \times \$20 = \$4,090,000$; and Educational Neglect – $397,300 \times \$2 = \$794,600$; Total = \$24,709,800

Annual Cost (in 2007 dollars) \$33,307,770

- **Total Direct Costs \$33,101,302,133**

- 1 Sedlak, A.J., & Broadhurst, D.D. (1996). *The third national incidence study of child abuse and neglect (NIS-3)*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Washington, DC.
- 2 Daro, D. (1988). *Confronting child abuse: Research for effective program design*. New York: Free Press.
- 3 Rovi, S., Chen, P.H., & Johnson, M.S. (2004). The economic burden of hospitalizations associated with child abuse and neglect. *American Journal of Public Health, 94*, 586-590. Retrieved September 7, 2007 from <http://www.ajph.org/cgi/reprint/94/4/586?ck=nck>
- 4 Miller, T.R., Cohen, M.A., & Wiersema, B. (1996) *Victim costs and consequences: A new look*. The National Institute of Justice. Retrieved August 27, 2007 from <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/victcost.pdf>
- 5 Scarcella, C.A., Bess, R., Zielewski, E.H., & Geen, R. (2006). *The cost of protecting vulnerable children V: Understanding state variation in child welfare financing*. The Urban Institute. Retrieved August 27, 2007 from http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311314_vulnerable_children.pdf

“My son, obey your father's commands, and don't neglect your mother's teaching.”

Proverbs 6:20

Think lesson not lecture.

3. **Activate it-** Don't worry about becoming a super mom, just become a mom. Allow God to activate within you the ability to emotionally connect with your children and their lives.

“To discipline and reprimand a child produces wisdom, but a mother is disgraced by an undisciplined child.”

Proverbs 29:15 (NLT)

- **Discipline/Rod-** *shā'·bet* (7626) rod, staff
- **Reprimand/Reproof** *to·kā·khä'* (8433) correction, rebuke

Super-Nanny is a reality television show where a British nanny comes to help parents with misbehaving and out of control children. She uses a variety of methods, she shows parents different ways of disciplining their children and maintaining order in their households. She is noted for her kind but firm no-nonsense approach.

When most people hear the word ‘**discipline**’, they have in their mind an image of some kind of punishment. In fact, sometimes it seems the only big ‘discipline’ issue of the day is whether or not parents should use physical punishment. Today I am very concerned with some of the language of discipline. It is becoming very popular the the language of disciplining is changing to be stated as “**striking**” a child, “**corporate punishment,**” and “**hitting**” a child. I am in no way in support of child abuse and am all about healthy means of discipline. But it would be unbiblical and a misinterpretation of God's Word to say that the scripture is saying something other than it is.

In my observation, “**neglect**” being the highest form of child abuse, I find the lack of discipline and a biblical form of punishment with children is the greatest child abuse. Not to sound like one of the old men sitting around in the coffee shop early in the morning, but schools were better when there was physical discipline in force. Ask any teacher who remembers, they will tell you. I'm saddened that we have voted out respect and order for fear of a law suit. It strikes my heart that a few good kids survive the free, independent destructive

forces of an all out free-for-all in our public schools.

The biblical language for discipline has become very offensive to many people who do not understand God's Word and somehow believe that His word is making statements that say other wise. I am all about understanding a healthy means of bringing discipline with my children, with many great people's examples and secret parental tricks, I've learned that physical punishment was never to be the norm, but the exception. Leading the way for this less physical, more practical discipline to happen was a keen attention on the rules and the routine of the home. Amazingly, kids love knowing what is next, not wanting something next. You will never be able to keep up with your child's dissatisfaction with life, you can only keep what will make them better. And in some instances, parents have given up or given over and lost the battle on both occasions.

- **Rod** – *shebet* – rod, staff, branch. The paddle, the idea of discipline that gets their attention.
- **Reproof** – *towkechah* – rebuke, correction, reproof, punishment, chastisement

Kids need both the rod and reproof. They need to know the consequences. They need to understand what they've done. When a child isn't disciplined, they've been left "to himself". Kids don't raise themselves. Parents raise kids.

The Three R's of Parenting

Having the same rules, routine and responses seems to be a key factor in raising children. I'm not sure if you recall when dad's used to be the key disciplinarian in the home and when you would act up as a kid you would hear your mom warn – "Wait until your father comes home!" All of us dreaded the moment dad drove up in the driveway. But today, things have changed, and rightly so, on one hand there are many single parent households, in others there are blended families where there is equal support but not necessarily equal authority, both parents need to be equally involved in family life and discipline.

1. **Rules**- You really don't have rules if there isn't agreement, you only have dominance! This is an important point to make. Whoever leads or runs the family may not be assisting the family, there may be order but there is not unity. Rules are standards to abide by for a productive and healthy life. It is important to understand what is healthy for the child, not just desirable for you. We are often driven to behave in certain ways that look good but have unhealthy motives.

I remember as a young person that loud children annoyed me. I always judged parents by how their children acted in a restaurant, and because of that I made up my own rules for my kids, they were good rules but they were based upon unhealthy reasons:

- You cannot talk loud while you at the table.
- You must eat what you put on your plate.

- You can never leave the table without asking to be excused.
- You can not run around and make noise in the restaurant if you are excused from the table.

I still think that these are good rules, but what is wrong with them? Why I had the rules was not based upon good, healthy boundaries, but that they were established because I was afraid of what people would think of me by the way my kids acted in public. These are good and fair rules, they establish healthy boundaries while giving freedom for a kid to be a kid.

Part of the process of discovering rules of child's behavior started with my own life. I can still remember being grabbed by my father in church, taken outside within earshot of the listening crowd and being swatted several times for my behavior.

I can't recall to this day why I was ever swatted. Don't get me wrong, I was so full of energy that I would be a handful to anyone. There was plenty of wrong I could get myself into, and I was in plenty need of discipline. What I concluded later on in life is, I really didn't get it that you act different in church than you do at home or school or outside. I think that it was assumed I got that. It was assumed that I understood that the church was where you sat for an hour and then you went home. Somehow that reality escaped me.

We were a lively worshiping church. Our worship was upbeat with a lot of lively praise raising the roof each Sunday. I would equally be just as busy scurrying about with whatever distracted me, coloring, dropping things and just doing something that looked interesting. But amongst the noise of the crowd, I couldn't be heard. But then, in the middle of it all, someone changed the rules. They went from full volume to a number two or three on the volume control. My normal activity sounded like a ten and became extremely noticeable when that half time hit.

Somewhere later on in life I came to realize that my parents weren't disciplining me to not act a certain way, they were disciplining me to not act that way there, outside it would be alright, at home it would probably be acceptable, but in church we respect others who are trying to hear the message and there will be plenty of time to play around later.

Rules are needed and they are necessary. To be without them, and early in life, you will have a hard road to climb, a challenge to your future. Notice the statement found in the last part of Proverbs 29:15

“...a mother is disgraced by an undisciplined child.”

How painful that really is!

2. **Routine**- There has been much research suggesting that children whose families follow a daily routine may be **healthier, better behaved** and could even **perform better at school**. What most parents miss when it comes to establishing “routine” is that you already have one, but it may

not be functioning for the benefit of the child or family. Routine looks like change, but it is actually a new level of doing life. And, if it's important enough to do, then it's important enough to **inspect** and have **consequences** over. There are the two reasons why routines never stick!

- **Dinner together every night** builds family unity,
- **Fun Time**, special activities, trips and individual attention
- **Shared chores**,
- **Bath**,
- **TV time**
- **Bedtime routine** is essential in order to build a **good sleep pattern** in your child.

Structured routine builds the individual just as the rules, it's easier to function as a whole family when everyone knows what's expected.

If it's important enough to do then it's important enough to write it up and post it on the fridge. This will help you to stay engaged with your children in the routines you have set out for them.

How to set up a routine

- **Start building routine around the times people wake up, eat and sleep.**
- **Communicate clearly, through every step of responsibilities and expectations.**
- **Be realistic with time and adjustments, you might have to grow them into them.**
- **Help prioritize your family needs with both parents.**

Today, children are confused between the idea that fathers or a male are the only disciplinarians in the family, or that he is not given the opportunity to discipline. This idea can leave dads without a relationship with his own kid on one hand or without respect on the other.

3. **Response**- How our children respond to us is important. Many parents believe that their children's bad behavior is just a form of letting off steam, expressing themselves, or finding themselves. But the truth is that these are emotional explosions that can eventually result in forms of anger and temper, where the child stamps their feet, kicks, hits and even screams.

A terrible habit can begin in the home when a parent only pays attention to their children when they are noisy and naughty, and ignoring them when they are nice and quiet. Both parents should be the good and the bad cop, you should be able to have fun with your children but when necessary, draw the boundaries. Respond in four areas of discipline:

"Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to

your soul.”
Proverbs 29:17

1. **The Response of Respect**

“Show your fear of God by standing up in the presence of elderly people and showing respect for the aged. I am the LORD.”
Leviticus 19:32

*“If you **curse** your father or mother, the lamp of your life will be snuffed out.”*
Proverbs 20:20

*“There are those (generations) who **curse** their fathers and do not bless their mothers...”*
Proverbs 30:11

*“The eye that **mocks** a father and despises a mother will be plucked out by ravens of the valley and eaten by vultures.”*
Proverbs 30:17

2. **The Response of Stewardship**

*“**Robbing** your parents and then saying, “What’s wrong with that?” is as serious as committing murder.”*
Proverbs 28:24

3. **The Response of the Law and the Prophets**

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”
Matthew 7:12 (NLT)

*Think **peace** not **pace**.*

Back To The Scripture

*“Surely you **remember**, brothers, our **toil and hardship**; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.”*
I Thessalonians 2:9

But he didn't leave it at that, he provided words or made statements that defined how that played out, three of them:

1. **Toil/Labor** (2873) (*kopos* from *kopto* = chop, cut down, strike) refers to beating or smiting as a sign of sorrow and then sorrow itself. Fatigue. Have you ever heard of someone saying, “I'm beat!” after a hard days work? This is exactly the meaning of the word. As labor it involves **toil and weariness and sorrow**. *Kopos* conveys the idea of arduous, **wearying toil involving sweat and fatigue** and emphasizes the weariness which follows on the straining of all of one's powers to the utmost. In secular Greek *kopos* means “beating,” “weariness as though one had been beaten,” and the “exertion” or “trouble” which causes this state. In prose it is the proper word for physical tiredness induced by work, exertion or heat.

2. **Labor/Hardship** (3449) (*mochthos* from *mógos* = labor, toil) means **toil, painfulness, travail, afflicting and wearisome labor**. Hardship, struggle, strenuous toil. It refers to hard and **difficult labor involving suffering** and implying an **unusual exertion of energy and effort**.
3. **Working** night and day (2038) (*ergazomai*) means to **engage in an activity involving considerable expenditure of effort**.

Four-Step Plan for Mothers

There is no doubt that there is a stress overload on our families today. Kids are going in 20 different directions. Opportunities are looking more like life challenges and we are becoming unraveled at the seams. It is important to review and re-prioritize yourself so you can re-prioritize your family.

1. **Stop the guilt.**
 - Realize you are toiling, laboring and working.
 - Regain the respect you deserve from your children
2. **Focus on what you can do, not what you are not.**
 - Don't grieve yourself because you are not everything. Kids need you the most, not everything else. Do do everything for your children, get them ready for life.
3. **Laugh and live again**
 - Reconnect with God and know that He loves you.
 - Refreshen yourself with good relationships that speak into your life, not drain it.
4. **Bring everyone together**
 - Family meetings
 - Family vacations and get-a-ways